

Pacific Halibut

Plan 2023

October 4, 2022



Heather Hall and Lorna Wargo
WDFW Intergovernmental Ocean Policy

Agenda

5:00 – 5:15 pm Introductions/Purpose of the Meeting/Review Agenda

Purpose: Review discussion from August meeting including the preliminary 2022 catch summary, review the proposals and analysis for the 2023 halibut season, and discuss final recommendations.

5:15 – 5:30 pm Review IPHC Areas, Catch Sharing Plan, and halibut management history

5:30 – 6:00 pm Review 2022 catch and analysis of alternatives

6:00 – 7:00 pm Discuss 2023 season structure, finalize season dates

7:00 – 7:30 pm Next steps

2023 Catch Sharing Plan – Final Action

PFMC November 2-8, 2022, Hybrid

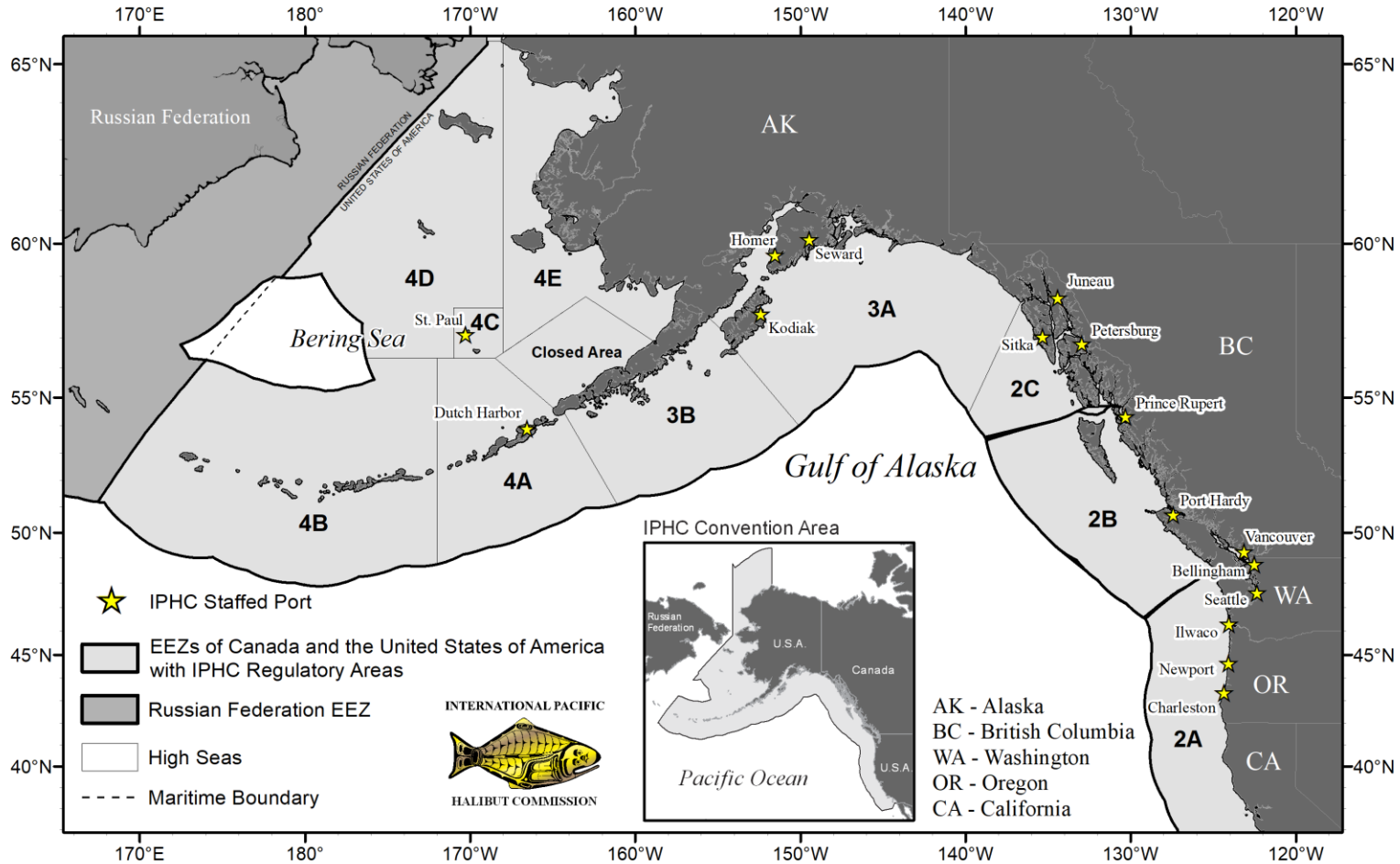
Pacific Halibut is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 3

IPHC Interim Meeting, November 30 – Dec 1, Webinar

IPHC Annual Meeting, January 24 – 28, TBD

7:30 pm *ADJOURN*

IPHC Regulatory Areas



Catch Sharing Plan

Management Goals

1. Establish season structures for each subarea that maximize fishing opportunity and achieve but not exceed subarea quotas.
2. Flexibility through timely inseason action(s), such as opening additional fishing days or shifting quotas between subareas, may be necessary to achieve the overall Washington sport allocation and fishery objectives.

2022

Catch Sharing Plan

Objectives

All Sub-areas

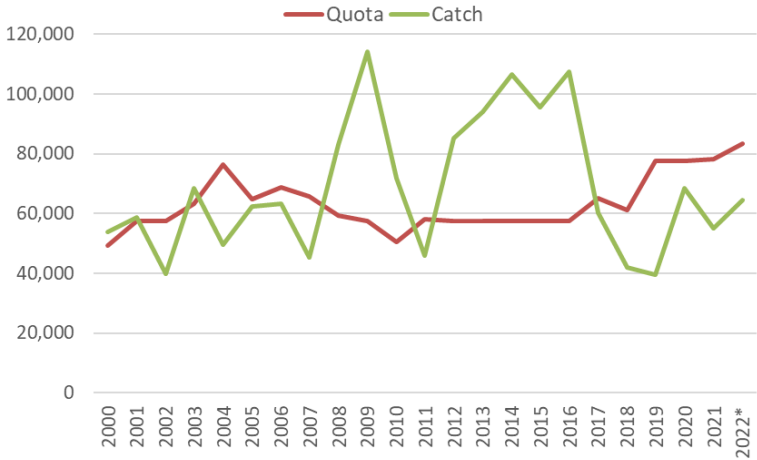
- Season dates will be developed at the end of November each year for the following year
- Open up to 3 days per week April, May, June; may include at least one weekday and one weekend day
- If quota remains after final open day in June, additional openings may be implemented in August and September

Sub-area specific

- Puget Sound – earliest date to open April 1
- Coastal subareas – earliest date to open April 30
- Columbia River – season dates coordinated with Oregon, no Saturdays
- Columbia River Nearshore – open Monday – Wednesday following opening of the all-depth fishery through September 30 or until 500 lb. quota attained
- South Coast Nearshore – May open if balance of primary fishery quota is insufficient for a full fishing day, open first Saturday after closure of primary fishery, seven days per week until quota taken

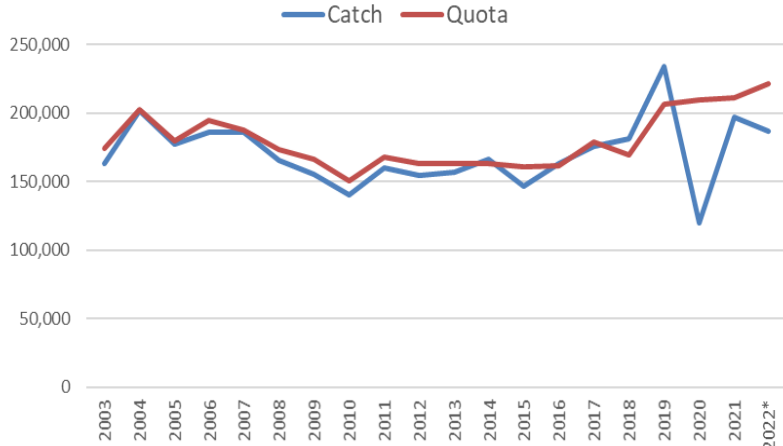
Review

Puget Sound Recreational Halibut Quota and Catch (lbs)

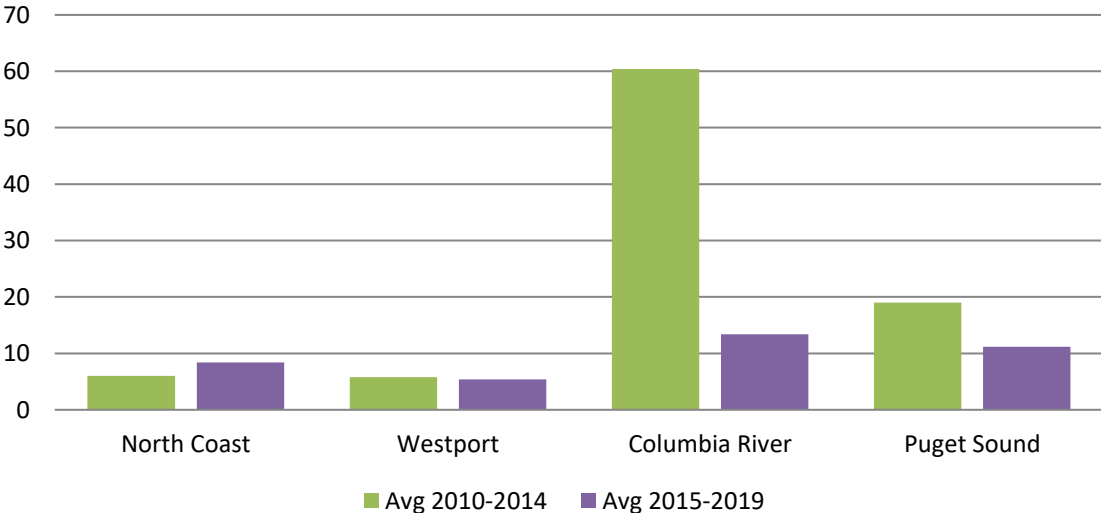


* Preliminary

Coast



Season Length (days)



WDFW Season Setting Principles

- Avoid effort shift: continue to align fishing days as much as possible, particularly Columbia River/ South Coast and North Coast/Sekiu to maximize season length and fishing opportunity
- Provide advance notice of season dates to allow anglers to plan rather than add dates inseason
- Provide more fishing opportunity in areas where catch was below the subarea allocation
- Recognize traditional days if possible (e.g., North Coast: Thu/Sat, South Coast: Sun/Thu, MA 5: Memorial Day derby)

2022 Catch Summary

Subarea	Subarea quota	Total Catch	% of Quota Caught
Puget Sound*	83,210	64,778	78%
North Coast	133,847	96,208	72%
South Coast	68,555	71,202	104%
Columbia River (WA & OR)	18,537	20,210	109%
Columbia River Nearshore	500	43	9%
Total	304,649	252,442	83%

*Does not include Puget Sound Area 7-10 July-September

Alternatives Approved for Public Review

- Puget Sound – 5 or 7 days per week
- South Coast – 3 days per week in May
- North Coast and Columbia River – Status Quo

Not included in the Catch Sharing Plan:

- Bag limit - Increase to 6 fish per year

Analysis – Coast

Subarea	North Coast	South Coast	Columbia River
Subarea Quota (2022; "High")	133,847	68,555	18,537
Maximum Daily Catch (2022)	4,921	11,799	2,642
Potential Days	27	6	7
Average Daily Catch (2022)	1,472	5,387	1,093
Potential Days	91	13	17
Average Daily Catch (2018, 2019, 2021)	7,675	7,896	2,027
Potential Days	17	9	9

Proposal for Discussion Coast

Marine Area 1:

May 4 through May 21: 2-days per week, Thursday, and Sunday
Memorial Day weekend: Thursday, May 25

June 1 through June 25: 2-days per week, Thursday and Sunday, and Thursday, June 29

Marine Area 2:

May 4 – 21: 3 days per week, Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday, and Tuesday, May 30

If sufficient quota remains: June 15, 18 (Thursday, Sunday) and June 22, 25 (Thursday, Sunday)

Marine 3 and 4:

May 4 through May 21: 2-days per week, Thursday, and Saturday
Memorial Day weekend: Friday, May 26 and Sunday, May 28

June 1 through June 24: 2-days per week, Thursday and Saturday, and Thursday, June 29

All Areas:

If quota remains after June 30, consider August and September dates.

Analysis – Puget Sound

Area 5, 6-10

Assumed Subarea

Allocation: 77,550

	High Catch	Med Catch	Low Catch
Year Range	2018-2022	2019-2022	2021-2022
Average Daily Catch	2,364	1,902	1,600
Potential Days	33	41	48
Open on:	4/6/2023		
Open through:			
7 days per week	5/8/2023	5/16/2023	5/24/2023
5 days per week	5/20/2023	6/1/2023	6/10/2023
Open on:	4/13/2023		
Open through:			
7 days per week	5/15/2023	5/23/2023	5/31/2023
5 days per week	5/27/2023	6/8/2023	6/17/2023

*Through date does not account for potential adjustments around Memorial Day weekend.

Proposal for Discussion Puget Sound

Marine Area 5, 6-10

Open all areas at the same time.

April 6 through May 22: 5-days per week, Thursday-Monday

Memorial Day weekend: Friday through Sunday, May 26, 27, 28

June 1 through June 30: 7-days per week

If quota remains after June 30, consider August and September dates

Comments



Facebook

Number indicates posts and/or thumbs up response

13	Open areas 6-10 early and make it 7 days a week from the start. We never meet our quota in that area, and by end of May the dogfish have moved in so bad it's almost impossible to fish halibut anyway.
1	Can we get August dates again in area 3 and 4? It is so nice to be able to get out and have fun in the sun!
2	Summer halibut has been a blast!
2	Was great having summer fishing this year!

EMAIL

Puget Sound: Recommend a **7-days a week beginning in mid-April**. This would allow anglers to fish on the best weather days and avoid days with bad weather/unsafe conditions. Because the sport harvest quota has gone unfilled in recent years, there is no reason to restrict access to this fishery to preserve quota to prolong the season. Extending the halibut season into August and September does not provide a good opportunity to increase sport harvest of halibut in Puget Sound due to the increased activity/abundance of dogfish during the warmer periods. Finally, trading unused halibut sport quota from Puget Sound to coastal areas unfairly shifts opportunity away from fishers who live in or prefer to fish in the more protected Puget Sound areas. This trading of quota also favors coastal charter operators over Puget Sound private boat anglers.

Allowable bait: The bottom fish/halibut regulations should be amended to **allow for use of sand dabs as halibut bait in waters greater than 120 feet deep in Puget Sound**. There is no conservation reason (i.e., reduced potential bycatch of rockfish) to prohibit possession/use of sand dabs as bait for halibut in Puget Sound.

Phone messages and email: “Great to have a six fish bag limit.”

2023 Recommendation

- Puget Sound
 - Open MA 5, 6-10 in April
 - Five or seven days per week

- Coast:
 - South Coast: three days per week in May, four additional days noticed in June
 - North Coast and Columbia River: status quo

- All Areas:
 - Option for seven days per week in August and September

Plan 2023

Wrap Up

- Questions
- Next Steps
 - November PFMC Meeting
 - IPHC Meetings



Thank you for attending!

Information

IPHC

- Landing updates

<https://iphc.int/data/landings-2022>

WDFW

- Halibut and Bottomfish Regulations/Landing updates

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/halibut>

- Lorna Wargo

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Lorna.Wargo@dfw.wa.gov

2023

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30